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Real Democracy in Operation: The Example of Switzerland. By FELIX BONJOUR. (New York: F. A. Stokes Company. 1920. Pp. viii, 226.)

Written in a pleasing style and admirably translated, this little book by Felix Bonjour, former president of the Swiss National Council, aims "to describe the mechanism of the democratic institutions peculiar to Switzerland and to explain the effects of those institutions." Accordingly rather more than half of the volume is devoted to a discussion of *Landsgemeinden*, the referendum, and the initiative. Briefer accounts are presented of federalism, elections, communes and churches, compulsory voting, democracy in the army and maintenance of neutrality, and the future of democracy in Switzerland. The appendix contains a short but effective summary of the bolshevist troubles in Switzerland during the latter part of 1918.

A distinctive feature of M. Bonjour's book is the large number of authoritative opinions on Swiss political institutions which he has gathered from many sources. The author's judgment is much more cool than might be inferred from the title of the book. It is entirely free from that strain of panegyric common to so many books on Swiss democracy. With regard to proportional representation M. Bonjour concludes that it has made the task of governments more difficult by compelling them "to be continually negotiating with parties, a troublesome business indeed, but less so here than elsewhere, thanks to popular rights and the fixed duration of ministerial office."

The author's comments on woman suffrage will not be pleasing to our militants, but there can be no doubt that they reflect Swiss opinion accurately. Although a partisan of the referendum, M. Bonjour admits that "there are periods when it is traduced by evil popular instincts, when it comes under the influence of local rivalries, and when it serves as the instrument for the spirit of routine or narrow conservatism or as the tool of demagogues." On the other hand he notes that "it puts an end to acute conflicts between people and governments, and provides one of the safest barriers there can be against revolutionary agitation. Nothing can give greater offense to those anarchist or "bolshevist" sections which wish to establish the rule of active and violent minorities."

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